

## Uxbridge Historic Cemetery Committee

The Uxbridge Historic Cemetery Committee (appointed by the Selectmen, May of 1996) is charged with fostering the protection, preservation and appreciation of the community historic burying grounds. There are 35 cemeteries in the town of Uxbridge with five being privately owned and maintained. The remaining 30 cemeteries are abandoned and neglected as defined under MGL c. 114, ss1-2 and s18, and the focus of our restoration and preservation efforts. The committee meets the third Tuesday of the month at the Cornet John Farnum House, 44 Mendon St. at 7 p.m.

The committee continues to monitor the gravel removal projects adjacent to two historic cemeteries: Cook Cemetery #7 (220 Quaker Highway) and the Darling Cemetery #5 (Rt. 122). Two other projects involve negotiations to establish preservation and maintenance agreements to secure the long term care and protection of the historic cemeteries adjacent to development. The proposed BJ's Regional Distribution Center on Quaker Highway abuts the Aldrich-Buxton Cemetery #30 (971 Quaker Highway). BJ's is working with us, the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the Army Corps of Engineers to develop a preservation and maintenance agreement for this historic cemetery. Ground penetrating radar identified the graves, both marked and unmarked. The distribution center is scheduled open in July and the restoration work in the cemetery will begin in the fall. BJ's has generously committed to the regular maintenance of this cemetery.

The Evergreen Acres cluster zoning development planned for a tract between King Street and Douglas Pike by Trans Canada (Ocean State Power Co.) will impact two cemeteries on the property, Jos. Richardson #14 and fieldstone graves #32. The committee appreciates the cooperative effort working with SITEC engineering to define the cemeteries (with protective buffer zones and access for maintenance), that will also be an attractive addition to the neighborhood.

The Mountain View Estates project, adjacent to the Holbrook Cemetery #35 (52 Albee Rd.), is currently going through the review process with the planning board. The committee worked with Heritage Design Group to create a buffer zone around the cemetery, and a designated right of way to access the cemetery from the proposed road in the development.

The committee continues its research of the history of the Norden/Swedish Cemetery #6 (994 Millville Rd.) on the Uxbridge/Millville line, to determine who is responsible for its regular superintendence. In the meantime, the committee funds seasonal care.

Researcher/genealogist Lyn Lovell of Milford continues the survey of the family cemeteries in town with information being entered into a database program. The

committee has a draft version and is continuing the historic research, taking photographs and documenting G.P.S. readings for the final survey.

The committee is also working with Ms. Lovell to file the historic properties survey forms with the Massachusetts Historical Commission. This designation raises the awareness that these cemeteries are of historic importance to our community and the Commonwealth. It gives them a measure of protection from projects funded by state or federal money, and partners us with MHC in dealing with threatened cemeteries. The survey project is funded by a generous \$500 donation from the Uxbridge Women's Club.

The committee received a grant from the Ocean State Power Community Foundation in the fall of 2004 to fund the development and placing of signage for each of the 35 cemeteries in the community. The signs were completed, and Koopman Lumber and Hardware generously supplied the installation materials at cost.. The signs are being placed in the cemeteries.

October 28<sup>th</sup>, marked the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the reburial of the individuals removed from the former Almshouse Burying Ground, for the construction of Rt. 146. An exhibit about the project and creation of the new Almshouse Burying Ground #27 (80 Almshouse Rd) was displayed at River Bend Farm in Uxbridge, for the month of October.

The committee receives no state or local tax dollars and works solely from the limited interest income from five cemetery trust funds, and donations. A donation was received from the Buffum Family Association. We extend our appreciation to the corporate sponsors of the following cemeteries: Cove Insurance Agency, the George Aldrich Cemetery #16 (22 Glendale Rd.); and Trans Canada Power, the Joseph Richardson Cemetery #14 (off Douglas Pike). Gerald Lemire sponsors the summer maintenance of the DeWolfe Cemetery #18 (30 Erickson St.) and assisted with the reclamation of the Gideon Mowry Cemetery, #15, (93 Glendale Rd.).

Twenty of the thirty cemeteries are receiving some seasonal care. The committee currently oversees the summer maintenance of thirteen cemeteries by Chris Cota. His professionalism, generosity and commitment to the care of the cemeteries is key to our success in managing these historic properties.

We thank the many friends, volunteers and abutters who assist in the care and maintenance of the cemeteries including: Albee Cemetery, Frank and Jill Kenrick, Buffum Cemetery, Mary Brundage, and Cody Brundage; Royal Farnum Cemetery, Domingos and Donna Sanchez; Hannah Seagrave Cemetery, Thomas and Janet Patnode; and the Tucker Cemetery, Uxbridge Rod and Gun Club.

A special thank you to Beth Butler and Roy Henry for their commitment to research and to identify and place a flag on each grave of our community veterans, and Jill and Frank Kenrick for placement of many of the new cemetery signs.

Shelly Merriam, Chair ('09)  
Sheryl Romasco ('08) Secretary  
Mary Brundage ('07)  
Beth Butler ('09)  
Roy Henry ('07)  
Jill Kenrick ('08)  
Doris Ostroskey ('08)